IRISH NATIONAL OPERA

CINDERELLA

(ROSSINI)



Dublin January 1974

The Cast of Cinderella

Cinderella Suzanne Murphy
Clorinda Eileen Donlon
Tisbe Celine Murphy
Ramiro Patrick Ring
Dandini Peter McBrien
Magnifico Brian Kissane
Alidoro Gerald Duffy

Production/Lighting
PADDY RYAN

Music Director
VERONICA McSWINEY

Stage Management
CHRISTINE CAFFERKY, TOM HANAHOE
BRENDAN KEYES

I.N.O. Manager
TONY Ó DÁLAIGH

Settings
BERNARD CULSHAW/KEN EDWARDS

Costumes
ALEX REID/JOAN WALSH/ANNE GAVIGAN

Acknowledgments

Irish National Opera wish to thank *Player Wills* and particularly *Frank Reddy* for help and co-operation above the ordinary in connection with the production of Cinderella.

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Patron:

Mr. George Colley T.D.

Artistic Advisors:

Veronica Dunne
Charles Lynch
Comdt. F. O'Callaghan
Michael O'Higgins
Dr. Hans W. Rosen



Irish National Opera

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Irish National Opera was founded to give Irish singers the opportunity of undertaking major operatic roles, to bring opera to provincial centres and to foster an interest in opera among the younger generation.

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Don Giovanni	43
Barber of Seville	41
Twelfth Night	3
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Operatic Concerts	30

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Organisations or individuals interested in being associated with performances in their areas are invited to contact:–

Tony Ó Dálaigh,
159 Sutton Park, Co. Dublin
Telephone 324040

Act 1

Scene 1. Magnifico's Kitchen
Scene 2. Ante-room of the Palace
Scene 3. The Palace

Act 2

Scene 1. Ante-room of the Palace
Scene 2. The Storm
Scene 3. Magnifico's Kitchen
Scene 4. The Palace.

CINDERELLA & THE YOUNG ROSSINI

La Cenerentola was the 19th of the 38 operas Rossini composed between 1810 and 1829. The last five were written for Paris; most of the others were composed for the operatic quadrangle, Milan, Rome, Naples, and Venice.

Rossini's first opera was La Cambiale di Matrimonio, a one-acter for the Teatro San Mose in Venice (1810). The success of this piece was confirmed by L'Equivoco Stravagante (1811) and L'Inganno felice (1812). Rossini was 20, and apart from his undoubted musical talent, he was a great social success, the idol of Venice. He was noted also for certain roguish characteristics. It was the custom for composers to include, in the second act of the opera seria, some arias for secondary characters called arie del sorbetto, so called because during these arias refreshments were served in the boxes, so that nobody paid the least attention to the singing. On arriving at Ferrara to conduct Ciro in Babilonia, Rossini found that his second female singer was strikingly ugly, and had a very inferior voice, except for one note – middle B flat. Rossini wrote an aria for her confined to that note alone, giving all the melody otherwise to the orchestra. The refreshments were put aside, the boxes listened spellbound, applauded loudly, and the unfortunate lady was delighted with her success.

Patrick Ring



Rossini scored further successes at Venice – notably Tancredi (1813), and was summoned by Milan, where however the two operas he produced were not well received. The escape of Napoleon from Elba, and the **arrival of his armies at this point threw northern Italy into some confusion, and Rossini gladly accepted a contract to compose for Naples.**



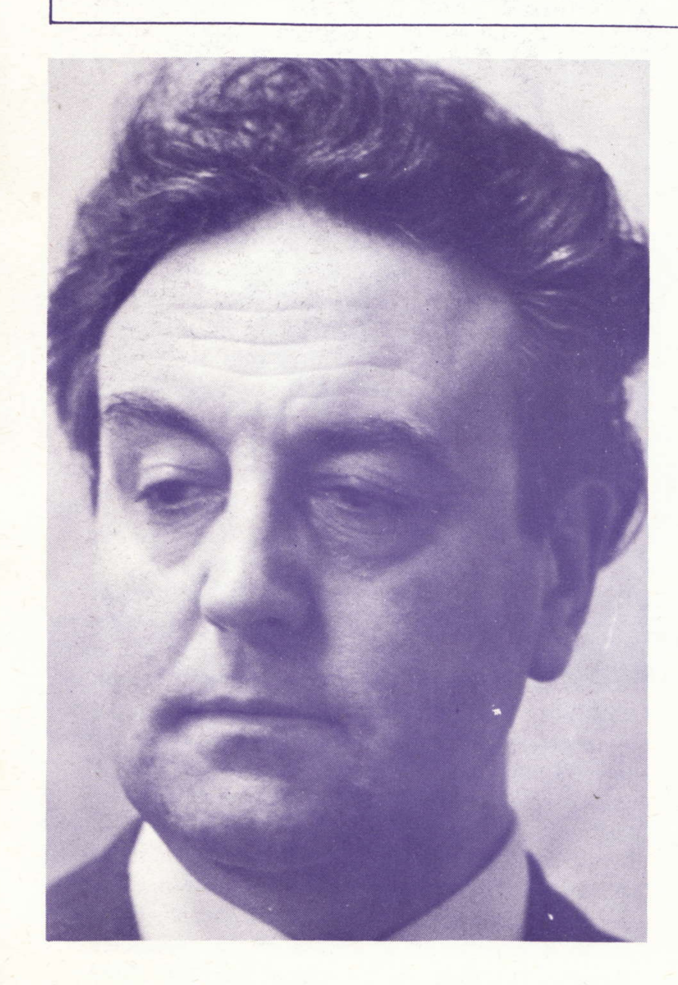
Waterford.
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Suzanne Murphy

The general rule at that time was that each operatic centre (which meant most towns in Italy) had several seasons of opera each year, the most important being the Carnival Season which began usually on 26 December. In the larger cities, and the capitals of the many kingdoms, principalities and dukedoms into which Italy was divided, the impresario could often count on a Court subsidy; in addition he took the profits from the gambling rooms attached to the theatre, which were well patronised during the intervals. A successful impresario kept the Court happy, and the gaming rooms filled, by attracting good singers and good composers.

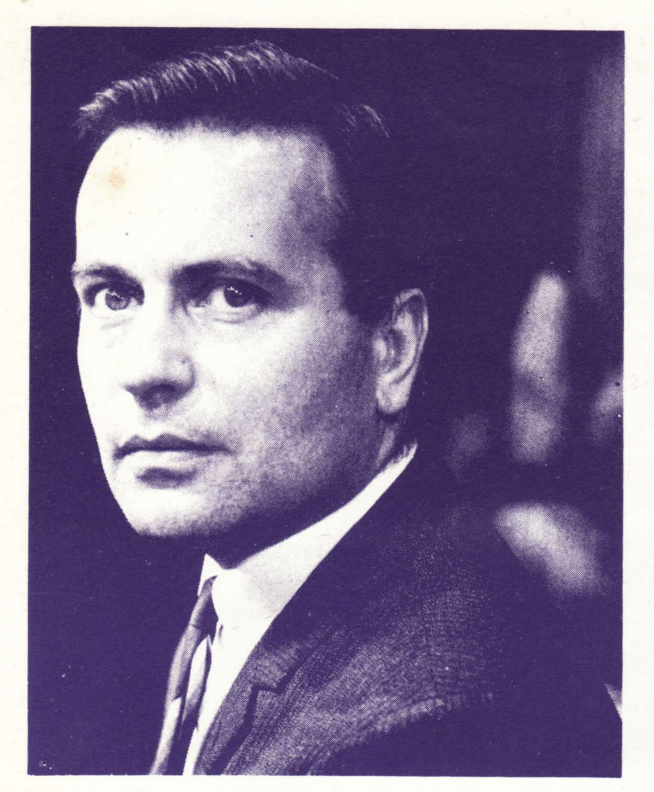
The impresario at Naples was Domenico Barbaja, a fantastic figure who began life as a waiter and achieved fame and some fortune by inventing a mixture of coffee or chocolate and whipped cream that remains popular to this day. With this fortune he then made a bigger one by speculating in contracts during the Napoleonic Wars, and still more from the gaming rooms at La Scala. He became impresario at La Scala, at San Carlo in Naples, and finally at Vienna. His "discoveries" included Rossini Bellini and Donizetti. He had the tremendous advantage of having artistic flair, musical discrimination, an instinctive taste for archecture, and a natural shrewdness, wholly unimpeded by education. He was completely illiterate. This then was the ruler of San Carlo, Naples



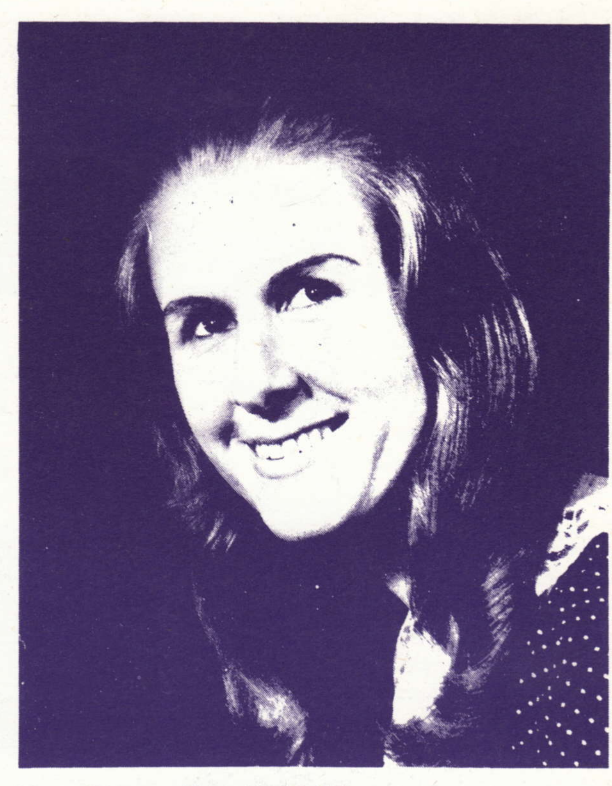
Gerald Duffy

when Rossini arrived there in the Spring of 1815, a man who ruled the Court and in turn was ruled by his soprano (and possibly his mistress) Isabella Colbran. Rossini probably knew her already, for she had received an honorary diploma from the Academy of Bologna when the fourteen year old Rossini received the same honour. At any rate he decided to cultivate her by writing music particularly suited to her vocal powers and her vocal idiosyncrasies.

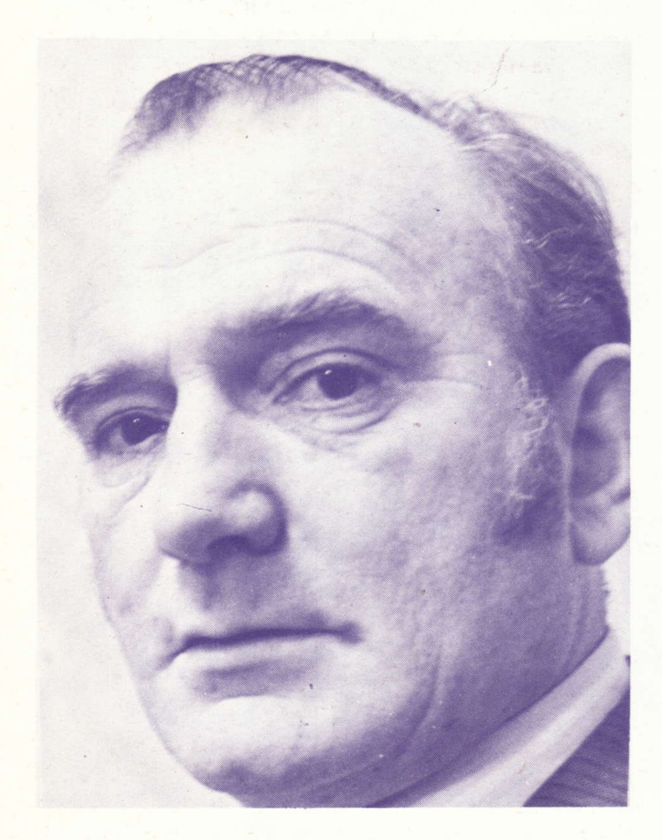
In the next five years Rossini scored four major successes, but because there was in his Naples contract a clause permitting leave-of-absence, two of those were not in Naples. It was Rome that first saw the Barber of Seville (1816) and La Cenerentola (1817), while Naples produced Otello (1816) and Mose (1818). Immediately, before the Barber, Rossini had written an opera, Torvaldo, for another Roman theatre, the Valle, and despite the failure of Torvaldo, the Valle management asked him back. As part of his fee, Rossini received board and lodging in the Impresario's home. The opera was due to be played on 26 December, but when he arrived in Rome he found that the libretto had not yet been chosen. Rossini went to bed, and Ferretti, the theatre librettist, sat beside him drinking, and discussing possible subjects. Somehow the story of Cinderella occurred to both of them. Rossini agreed to write the music if Ferretti produced a scenario; then he turned over and went to sleep, while Ferreti worked all night and delivered the first instalment of the libretto on Christmas Day. Instalments kept arriving for the next three weeks, and Rossini set them as they came and in twenty four days finished the opera, all except the overture which he borrowed from one of his earlier works.



Producer: Paddy Ryan



Music Director Veronica McSwiney



Brian Kissane



Celine Murphy


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Peter McBrien

The opera was staged on 25 January 1817, and like the Barber a year before, it was a resounding failure. "Never mind" said Rossini to the distressed Ferretti "It will be very popular in Rome before the end of the season; in the whole of Italy at the end of a year, and in France and England within two years. Impresarios and still more, prima donnas, will be fighting for it".

He was right. Cenerentola was revived every year for 50 years before it began to fall out of favour. For many years it obscured even the Barber. By 1880 however it had almost vanished from the opera stage and apart from a brief revival in 1890, it did not reappear until the emergence in 1921 of Conchita Supervia. After her death in 1936 it went into decline once more, though in recent years, as part of a general reawakening of interest in Rossini's operas, it has begun to make yet another comeback. The main reason for these ups and downs in the history of Cenerentola is of course the problem of finding the right voices. The part of Cenerentola herself is sung by a coloratura mezzo-soprano, a very rare creature, and a very high standard of vocal technique is required of the other members of the cast if they are to do justice to Rossini's music. In all probablility, revivals of Cenerentola by the leading opera houses will occur each time a coloratura mezzo, with competent support, appears on the scene.



Eileen Donlon

Ferretti's libretto, though based on Perrault's fairy tale, eliminates from the story all mythical and supernatural elements. He does however retain a philosopher magician, Alidoro, to provide the necessary transformation of Angelina (Cinderella) for her appearance at the palace. Otherwise the comedy is combined with a strong vein of eighteenth-century rationalism concerned with reality and appearance, gratitude and ingratitude, and virtue rewarded.

Dr. Tom Walsh's book "Opera in Old Dublin" records that Cenerentola was first played at the Theatre Royal in 1836 for three performances and in 1837 for two. Dr. Walsh himself staged the opera at Wexford in 1956 and in Belfast in 1967. The Dublin Grand Opera Society gave it for the first time in 1972.

Anthony Quigley



Gioacchino Rossini

These performances were made possible through the generous help of AN COMHAIRLE EALAION.